THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE (SHRI KADAMRUR M.R. JANARTHANAN): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House to the extent available.

Excise duty on packed tea

1467. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to withdraw excise duty on the packed food items;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have withdrawan the excise duty on packed tea; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN): (a) No.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) Yes.

(d) Central excise duty on packed tea has been exempted with effect from 28.2.1999 as part of the Budget for 1999-2000 presented in the Lok Sabha on 27.2.1999.

Commitments of assistance by World Bank and Asian Development Bank

1468. DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the commitments of fresh assistance by the World Bank Group and the Asian Development Bank during the current financial year;

(b) how do these commitments compare with commitments during 1997-98; and

(c) what are the expectations for 1999-2000?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) The commitment by the World Bank Group during the current bank fiscal year (ending June 1999) is expected to be US $ 2.1 billion for 12 projects excluding the four projects mentioned at Part (b) of the answer. The commitment by Asian Development Bank during 1998-99 was US $ 250 million.

(b) The commitment by the World Bank Group during the bank fiscal year 1997-98 (ending June 1998) was US $ 2.14 billion for 11 projects. In addition four projects for US $ 1.2 billion were negotiated but are yet to be approved by the World Bank. The commitment by Asian Development Bank during 1997-98 was US $ 563 million.

(c) For the World Bank, a similar level of commitment is expected for the bank fiscal year 1999-2000. As regards Asian Development Bank, lending programme of the Bank for 1999-2000 will be finalised after the visit of the Bank's Country Programming Mission to India.

Assistance to steel industry by the Financial Institutions

1469. DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be plased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has issued any instructions to the public sector financial institutions regarding assistance to the steel industry;

(b) if so, what are the details of these instructions; and

(c) what is the justificaiton thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN): (a) The financial institutions (FIs) sanction assistance to industry based on prudential norms and financial assessment of the proposals. No instructions are